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1. **The Catalog Critic: Pearls: Luxury Gift-Giving by Mail**
   By Kym Canter. **Wall Street Journal (Eastern edition).** New York, N.Y.: Mar 27, 1998. p. 1

   Full text   Abstract

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2. **Heading north: Conducting commerce in Canada**
   Roger Morton. **Logisticstoday.** Cleveland: Nov 1997. Vol. 38, Iss. 11; p. 32 (9 pages)

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3. **Mail order madness**
   Wilkinson, Deborrah M. **Black Enterprise.** New York: Jul 1996. Vol. 26, Iss. 12; p. 123 (4 pages)

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4. **Retail return fraud Merchants feel used, abused Burned retailers are fed up, clamping down**
   Ellen Neuborne. **USA TODAY (pre-1997 Fulltext).** McLean, Va.: Jun 3, 1996. p. 01.B

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5. **Larry's: A shoe-in for America's #1 men's shoe store**
   Raphel, Murray. **Direct Marketing.** Garden City: Jan 1996. Vol. 58, Iss. 9; p. 22 (4 pages)

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6. **Scott Adams: Gadfly of the high-tech workplace**
   Brittan, David. **Technology Review.** Cambridge: Jan 1995. Vol. 98, Iss. 1; p. 22 (8 pages)

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7. **Satisfaction guaranteed?**
   Wagner, Grace. **Lodging Hospitality.** Cleveland: Jun 1994. Vol. 50, Iss. 6; p. 46 (2 pages)

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8. **Building a brand: The Saturn story**
   Aaker, David A. **California Management Review.** Berkeley: Winter 1994. Vol. 36, Iss. 2; p. 114 (20 pages)

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9. **EGGHEAD EXEC IS HARD-BOILED ABOUT CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**
   Jim Erickson, P-I Reporter. **Seattle Post - Intelligencer.** Seattle, Wash.: Apr 16, 1993. p. c.8

●   ●

📄 Full text   🔳 Abstract

☐ 10. **Egghead exec is hard-boiled about customer satisfaction**
Erickson, Jim. **Seattle Post - Intelligencer.** Seattle, Wash.: Apr 16, 1993. p. --
       📄 Full text   🔳 Abstract

☐ 11. **Management Software Update: Part 1**
Schell, Ernest H.. **Catalog Age.** New Canaan: May 1992. Vol. 9, Iss. 5; p. 81 (4 pages)
       📄 Full text   📄 Page Image - PDF   🔳 Abstract

☐ 12. **MONDAY MEMO**
Seattle Times. Seattle, Wash.: Feb 1, 1988. p. D.1
       📄 Full text   🔳 Abstract

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Management Software Update: Part 1

Schell, Ernest H.. **Catalog Age**. New Canaan: May 1992. Vol. 9, Iss. 5; pg. 81, 4 pgs

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Subjects:	Software reviews, Manyproducts, Mail order houses, Characteristics, Catalogs, Applications
Classification Codes	9190 US, 9120 Product specific treatment, 8303 Wholesale industry, 5240 Software & systems
Locations:	US
Companies:	Nashbar-Associates Inc, Smith-Gardner Associates Inc, Zircon Inc
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Abstract (Article Summary)

Systems development in the catalog management software field has been more active in the past year than in the previous several years combined. Not only have many new systems been introduced, but established systems have been significantly enhanced with powerful and flexible new capabilities. Several minicomputer programs have experienced changes, including: 1. Smith-Gardner & Associates Inc.'s MACS (Mailorder And Cataloging System), 2. Nashbar/Associates Inc.'s Q/OP, and 3. Zircon Inc.'s Zircon Mail Order System. There have been more than 2,000 enhancements to MACS, which offers powerful inventory management and forecasting tools, in the past year, ranging from major new program modules to minor screen changes. One of the most innovative elements in the newest version of MACS is a consolidated **product** status screen. Nashbar, meanwhile, has been working with Systems Builder Plus, a 4th-generation language, to redesign its entire system. New enhancements at Zircon include Zircon's being rewritten for Unidata to run in a UNIX environment on the ⓞNCR 3000 series.

Full Text (2509 words)

What a year! Systems development in the catalog management software field has been active in the past 12 months or so than in the previous several years combined. Not only have many new systems been introduced, but established systems have been significantly enhanced with powerful and flexible new capabilities.

This first part of the annual software update will look at changes to several minicomputer programs. Changes in other mini and micro systems will be addressed in a future article.

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MACS (Mailorder And Cataloging System) Smith-Gardner & Associates Inc., 5455 M North Federal Highway, Boca Raton, FL 33487. Telephone 407-241-9505.

Introduced two years ago on the HP-3000 platform, MACS is a fast-evolving system with more than 30 installations, many of them handling high-volume fulfillment of many thousands of orders per day. The system is also readily adaptable for multidivision, multicompany fulfillment, and is in use at one major fulfillment service bureau.

MACS offers some very powerful inventory management and forecasting tools, as well as flexible on-line monitoring and reporting in bar chart formats called "barometers." All indexing and reporting is also run on-line, so there's no need to shut down the system for end-of-day or end-of-period processing. You can have order-entry running 24 hours a day, seven days a week, if you need it.

With a centralized data dictionary, MACS can be readily adapted to non-U.S. order-entry environments (all screens, prompts and reports can be readily translated.) There are also new, sophisticated protocols for currency exchange (and symbols), address formatting and exporting for handling shipments abroad or for offshore fulfillment. Each country can have its own address formats, mailing codes and separate exchange or currency data and conventions for sales and purchasing.

There have been more than 2,000 enhancements to MACS in the past year, ranging from major new program modules to minor screen changes (although changes in screen layout and labels can also be made very easily by the user, as well). The updates include:

"Quick Ship" for fulfilling large volume or single-item promotions on up to 26 separate SKUs (per company, or a total of 60 systemwide), with the option to select a specific drop-shipper. No back-orders are allowed in Quick Ship. You have the option to assume ship-confirmation or to confirm by lot, and you can do zone-skipping, if you wish.

A new Report Customizer allows you to customize menu selections and edit screen layouts. For the reporting barometers, you can set the scale, number of elements, refresh rate, element types and colors of the bars.

Help screens are available for most fields on each screen, indicating the type of data required, its format, a description of what is allowed and not allowed, search-values, and the element number for system reference.

A word processor is available as well to edit the help screens. A cut-and-paste library assists in entering repetitive comments.

In the advertising analysis module, you can now track variable cost of a **product** within the catalog for promotional testing; track price mark-ups or mark-downs; use a color/size/style matrix; use a dedicated shipping method for a specified promotion (or test various shipping methods); and offer a dedicated discount rate per promotion. You can also have a "marketing SKU" for a repeated SKU in a given catalog, and exclude postage and handling on items like a **gift** certificate.

Upsell/cross-sell prompts now appear in a seven-page window of eight lines by 80 characters. Customers can now be selected by the type of **products** they have purchased, price paid, or date of order. Shipping methods can be predetermined and prescreened to eliminate disallowed methods, such as UPS to Puerto Rico or APO/FPO. Messages on the packing slip/invoice can be by line-item or for the entire document.

Customers can be segmented on an RFM basis by total number of orders, date of first/last order, total dollars, customer status (e.g., a ship-to) and customer type. SIC can be factored in, if required.

MACS allows any combination of nine vendors or manufacturers per **product**. Receiving documents can be printed with quality control notes. An SKU file can be copied to another file for new **product** entry where only slight editing is required.

An SKU can have up to 15 "aliases" to cover typographical errors, a UPC warehouse code, and so on. Keyword descriptions can be added to the SKU file for **product** category searches on elements not contained in the **product** description or on price/category combinations. The system is designed, however, so that there is virtually no difference in selection time if keywords are used or if the **product** files are searched in their entirety, regardless of the size of the files. Likewise, the system can search 5,000 customers as quickly as 5 million. In all cases, search

times are blazingly fast on the 900 series of the HP-3000 that the system runs on.

MACS now offers just-in-time purchasing. The system can generate requisitions automatically for confirmation to produce purchase orders. Each line on a purchase order can have notations, and the system can accommodate vendor comments of up to 99 pages of 8 lines by 50 characters. When entering a line item, the system will display comparative data on multiple vendors on prices, gross margin and delivery times. You can also build a purchase order from a color/size/style matrix.

One of the most innovative elements in the newest version of MACS is a consolidated **product** status screen, displaying weekly sales data and averages, demand data by week/month/year, all parts of a kit, purchase order data by date/quantity/detail, item locations, reorder point, returns, vendor data summary, inventory trends by sales/adjustments/moves, and weeks of safety stock. Demand can be captured for line items that are entered on the system and then canceled later, or for entire orders that are canceled because of a backorder. Demand data can be analyzed separately for both mail order and point of sale.

You can define up to 9,999 generic matrices for size/color/style, then adapt each one for each SKU. You can also tailor the SKU number for size/color/style groupings that will roll-up for sales analysis.

Open accounts can now be evaluated on-line by days to pay in both numeric and graphic tables by time period (to spot trends in slow payments, for instance) to determine whether to accept an order. Order payments can be made by multiple methods and multiple credit cards. MACS is now totally integrated with the Vertex system for both collecting and reporting/paying sales taxes nationwide. Canadian GST taxes and other foreign duties can also be collected and accounted for.

MACS can tie directly to a phone switch for automatic number identification. The sales rep's customer note window not only permits contact notes, but will also display a complete history of system actions for each customer (merges, previous orders, all credit card numbers on file, etc.). On **product** look-up, the rep can enter the number of the line showing the **product** to be entered for automatic line-item entry. Customization and personalization can be preprogrammed with up to 99 different styles and patterns. MACS also gives you three types of "conditional **products**" (i.e., available based on number of previous orders from a customer, dollar value of previous orders, or other variables). You can also have variable kits, with prompts for item selection. Ship-tos can be maintained in a single historical file for each customer, or in several "lists" by list type.

Order histories in MACS now indicate whether an order was a purchase site, an ordered-by, a ship-to address, or a bill-to address. There is a complete audit trail of changes to an order, and a separate audit trail for manifesting and shipping data.

You can set a hierarchy for which order comments will print on the shipping label (at line-item, order, or customer level). The system produces manifests for all methods of shipping (including Canada Post), and has EDI manifests on-line to ⓘFederal Express and Airborne with no printed manifests required.

Returns are processed with an optional **return** authorization, and you can elect whether to charge shipping/handling on exchanges. You can also ship a replacement before receiving the **return**, with a follow-up audit trail. MACS produces call tags, and provides detail and summary level reports on exchanges, **returns**, **refunds** and call tag processing.

Mail order-entry can be suspended for phone order-entry, then resumed at the point at which it was suspended. As for ease of order-entry, there is not only on-line help and documentation for all fields, but numerous look-up tables for acceptable data options (such as titles).

In processing returns with no documentation, you can find an order by customer name and SKU number. The system will assign an ordertracking number in lieu of an order number for invoice adjustments, if requested, if the item appears on more than one order. Returned items can be allocated for return to vendor with adjustments to accounting. MACS can also handle fully serialized inventory (for receiving, shipping and returns).

MACS now accommodates cycle counts, comprehensive assembly (verging on "light manufacturing," including labor costing, bill of materials and job scheduling). The system includes a point-of-sale module, too, with store inventory management, UPC barcoding, register management and activity analysis (dollars and orders by pay

type). POS has on-line order management and inventory data, and **gift** shipping can also be done at the retail level (fulfilled from the warehouse).

Q/OP Nashbar/Associates Inc., 4141 Simon Road, Youngstown, OH 44512. Telephone 216-788-9000.

Nashbar moved to new, larger office space this past year, and now has nearly 80 installed sites. Its Q/OP system, though still available in PICK, is now also available in Unix through Unidata, a Unix-based relational database.

During the past year, Nashbar has been working with System Builders Plus (SB+), a fourth-generation language, to redesign its entire system, which the company expects to complete this fall. Meanwhile, a retail module in SB+ is now available, providing a PC-style look and feel, multilevel help, rapid data access, sophisticated cross-referencing, pop-up windows for prompts, user defined menus and function keys, and a flexible report writer and user-defined forms. It also records clerk ID on each transaction, alerts clerks for management approval when required, captures customer addresses, and performs sales analysis routines and inventory forecasting functions.

Q/OP now has an outbound telemarketing utility that generates call lists that can be segmented by any field or criteria and targeted by sales rep. Client-defined branching scripts are available, along with call-back and reorder reminders. (Nashbar plans to offer individually tailored scripts for each rep sometime in the future.)

Nashbar is offering the Unidata version of its software on minicomputers from both ⓘNCR (the new 3000 line) and Digital Equipment Corp. (DEC) running SCO Unix, Ultrix and VMS. On ⓘNCR/ADDS Mentor minis, Q/OP can run in PICK while other applications run simultaneously in Unix.

Q/OP includes an in-house communications capability that gives each terminal an electronic mailbox, telephone message system and company bulletin board, along with project scheduling capabilities, word processing and electronic desktop tools.

Other new functions include UPS International Shipping/Groundsaver/Saturday/Hundredweight services, ⓘFederal Express PowerShip, partial manifesting, zone-skipping and carrier manifests.

New advertising and sales reports give users enhanced forecasting and demand analyses. There are new credit memos and balance due notices for open accounts, on-line customer aging, aged held-order processing, drop-ship verification, customized PC credit card processing, expedited customer refunds, increased fraud protection, active/inactive inventory, releasable and non-releasable kit processing, new bill-of-materials processing, expanded vendor data, a new restocking system, additional order-entry messages, enhanced quantity price breaks, NCOA capabilities, expanded tax tables, reason code for quantity corrections, enhanced pricing updating routines, additional multiple ship-to entries, enhanced picking routines, and new data integrity and data reconstruction features.

Zircon Mail Order System Zircon Inc., 137 Summit Avenue, Peabody, MA 01960. Telephone 508-532-6400.

Zircon has a new corporate address and a wide range of new enhancements. Another PICK classic, Zircon has been rewritten for Unidata to run in a Unix environment on the ⓘNCR 3000 series.

Over the past several years, the company has also developed and refined its own proprietary fourth-generation language (with screen handler, forms handler and macro compiler) to enhance program development and customization through screen-painting techniques and generation of a library of subroutines. For example, Zircon can set up an unlimited number of shipping options, with the ability to link any one of these to special promotions or split-ship A/B testing.

Zircon introduced touchtone order-entry last year with a DEC-Talk interface. It is now testing a digitized voice interface using DEC Voice, giving the system the ability to vocally verify a customer's name and address, as well as other data entered by the customer on a touchtone keypad.

As for other new functions: An "IQ" utility in order-entry links any field with any other field for look-up reference in a customizable multiple windowing environment (with automatic window-sizing based on number of lines of data). Customer service has unlimited note fields and tickler reminders for call-backs. Inventory look-up has been enhanced through subject groupings and multilevel classification. A new wrinkle with interesting marketing potential

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is the system's "personal shopper" capabilities. You can search items by price or style brackets, and you can set up a "bridal registry" or other similar multitransaction database for an individual customer.

The system's extensive on-line help can now be easily user-customized. Incorrect data entries are rejected, with a list of valid options displayed. You can suspend a mail order to take a phone order, suspend that for another routine, and then jump back into either one, at your option.

Zircon offers automatic insertion of city and state upon entry of zip code, with a pop-up query when more than one jurisdiction shares a zip (it happens!). You can also suppress an entire zip code from order-entry approval.

Discounts can be by line item, order, customer type, **merchandise** type or media type, with unlimited multiple price breaks per catalog. **Gift** orders can now suppress prices on the packing slip. Customer service messages, which can be entered using abbreviations, can be included or suppressed from the packing slip, as desired.

The system's comprehensive G/L and accounting modules can be updated by any period, including daily. Batch control utilities reconcile orders and totals. You can elect to give credit for a sale to either a bill-to or ship-to name.

Zircon can now manage continuity shipments (in a module called "PACE") for straight or overlapping series fulfillment, with adjustable shipping intervals, til-forbid, credit card authorization, open account billing, returns processing, delinquency processing and reporting capabilities.

In the warehouse, Zircon offers daily ready-pick replenishment based on orders received, randomized bulk storage, multiple SKUs at each location, and a Federal Express PassPort system with barcode interface to automatically send name and address to ⓘFederal Express and generate a ⓘ**FedEx** shipping label with waybill number. All postage-and-handling algorithms are user-definable, with automatic selection of the lowest-cost shipping method.

Zircon now has return authorization numbers and enhanced reporting for returns by type and dollar value.

Ernest H. Schell is president of The Communications Center, Jenkintown, PA, executive director of the Catalog Systems Management **Network**, and a consultant for catalog software selection, operations audits and database implementation.

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NRF studies electronic shopping

Anonymous. Discount Store News. New York: Feb 21, 1994. Vol. 33, Iss. 4; pg. 3, 2 pgs

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Subjects:	Trends, Industrywide conditions, Home shopping, Discount department stores
Classification Codes	9190 United States, 8390 Retail stores, includes groceries
Locations:	US
Author(s):	Anonymous
Publication title:	Discount Store News. New York: Feb 21, 1994. Vol. 33, Iss. 4; pg. 3, 2 pgs
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ISSN/ISBN:	00123587
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Text Word Count	1076
Article URL:	http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:pqd&rft_val_fmt=ori:fmt:kev:mtx:journal&genre=article&rft_id=xri:pqd:did=00000000

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Abstract (Article Summary)

A number of disparate factors are contributing to the impending success of the electronic home shopping format. These include: 1. dissatisfaction with traditional store shopping due to poor service, lack of product knowledge on the part of sales clerks and customer concerns about safety in parking lots, 2. lessening technophobia regarding computers, and 3. a boom in the number of electronic home shopping services available. These are the conclusions of a consumer survey on electronic shopping sponsored by ⊘MasterCard International for the National Retail Federation. The study found that attitudes have changed to those in which consumers are more concerned about replenishment than they are in acquisition. Shoppers want ways to make the price comparison and information-seeking process easier, and 40% said they would pay more for speed and convenience in shopping.

Full Text (1076 words)

NEW YORK--Electronic home shopping is poised to become a major retailing format, driven by a number of disparate factors:

* Dissatisfaction with traditional store shopping due to poor service, lack of product knowledge on the part of sales-clerks and customer concerns about safety in parking lots and malls.

* Lessening "technophobia" regarding computers; as the price of PCs and modems drops, these devices become easier to use and a growing number of consumers are becoming more familiar and comfortable with this technology.

* A boom in the number of electronic home shopping services available on computer online services and cable and broadcast television programs, accompanied by a greater variety of merchandise and the range of prices for these products.

These are the conclusions of a consumer survey on electronic shopping sponsored by ⓘMasterCard International for the National Retail Federation. The study, conducted by Yankelovich Partner, was featured during an NRF session on home shopping.

(The explosive interest of retailers and manufacturers in the potentials and pitfalls of interactive shopping also inspired two other recent studies that weren't part of the NRF program. One was conducted by Coopers & Lybrand for the International Mass Retail Association and the other was EON Corp.'s comparison of separate sample surveys conducted during 1992 by Simmons Market Research Bureau and National Family Opinion. EON, formerly Answer TV, has developed an interactive TV system for shopping and information services.)

The NRF study found that the "shop till you drop" spirit has changed to a "drop shopping" attitude in which consumers are more concerned about replenishment than they are in acquisition. Shoppers want ways to make the price comparison and information-seeking process easier, and 40% said they would pay more for speed and convenience in shopping.

In particular, computer shoppers "are information seekers," the survey stated. It added: "convenience dominates consumers' shopping choices, and is used as a catch-all term incorporating value, service, time and stress."

Interactive shopping's inability to provide the "touch and feel" offered by stores is a "significant hurdle...particularly in soft goods categories." But consumers' freedom "to shop for what they want, when they want will be critical to the continued growth of interactive home shopping."

Right now, the hurdles are holding back home shopping, with 13% of TV shoppers saying they will shop through this format more often in the future and 49% of computer online shoppers saying they would do the same in the future.

Consumers who haven't shopped via TV said they would do so if they received a discount (51%), could call up a specific product category (50%), received free postage (45%) and got advanced notification of when certain shopping programs would air (39%).

The study noted that home shoppers are "an attractive market," with computer shoppers in particular, an upscale group with a median income of 52,000, almost all of whom have attended college. TV home shoppers' median income was $37,200.

Isaac Lagnado, president of Tactical Retail Solutions, who moderated the NRF home shopping panel, said the key to this format "is to find out how little you can sell merchandise for, not how much." The target customers are baby boomers, 35 years and older, who are core department store, high income, fashion-oriented shoppers with large discretionary spending power.

Electronic retailers have to offer a mix of national brands and private label goods in a "more classy assortment" that highlights "newness," with 35,000 to 40,000 new items a year.

Michael Ullman, Macy's chief executive officer, saw home shopping as part of a $50 billion direct marketing business that also includes catalogs and computer online services. Macy's plans to launch its own TV shopping channel in the fall whose tag line will be: "The only department store in your living room."

Macy's is using the technology to achieve growth on TV as well as in stores. The venture will allow consumers to spend less time shopping. The systems also will allow customers to **return goods** either by mail or direct to the chain's 110 stores.

Gerald Hogan, president of the ⓘHome Shopping Network, noted that TV shopping is in an era of change. But the format still remains "the ultimate test market that produces instant data." This means a show "can be restructured whole [while] still on the air" to reflect viewers interests.

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Richard Baker, president of apparel manufacturer ⓘBernard Chaus, said home shopping offers suppliers a way to cut overhead and have direct access to customers. TV selling both builds brand awareness and provides a change to test new products without advertising costs.

Still, interactive shopping raises questions and problems for retailers. Will home shopping generate new income and new customers or just rechannel sales and divert shoppers? The low margins needed to sell goods on TV and the high rate of returned merchandise are major challenges, he added.

The IMRA study warned that retailers should act now to "seize the new opportunities that the growth of electronic distribution channels represent." Merchants who consider electronic shopping "an either/or proposition are making a big mistake."

Computer online shoppers tend to be younger, with 36.3 years the average age, compared to TV buyers, whose average age is around 43.8 years. Consumers who make infomercial purchases have an average age that is about 43.2 years.

A breakdown of purchases on TV shopping services shows that during a typical six-month period, 28% of customers spent less than $59; 19% spent $100 to $199; 15% Spent $50 to $99; 13% spent $200 to $299 and 10% spent over $500.

The EON comparison showed that both average consumers (the Simmons study) and electronic enthusiasts (the NFO study) strongly favored using interactive shopping for comparison shopping and as a means of telling manufacturers what they want. The technology was seen as a way to save time shopping and to order free samples and coupons for advertised products.

The two samples voiced similar concerns about interactive shopping. They included: the temptation to do too much impulse buying, the potential to receive more junk mail, fear that others would learn their password or that children would order without parents' permission, and worry about purchasing too much on credit cards and loosing control over family spending.

PRODUCTS CONSUMERS WANT ON ALL INTERACTIVE SHOPPING SERVICES

1. Apparel/clothes/better quality clothes

2. Home Improvement /home items/housewares/household goods

3. Jewelry

4. Electronics

5. Sporting goods/sports equipment

6. Tools

7. toys

8. Cooking and kitchen appliances/utensils

9. Children's clothing

10. Food/groceries

Source: IMRA/Coopers & Lybrand study, "Navigating Through Changing Channels."

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